

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-04 INR-05 LAB-01

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 L-01 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DRC-01 DOTE-00 /059 W

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R 170049Z OCT 74

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2379

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL PERTH BY POUCH

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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CANBERRA FOR CONLON AND SIMPSON

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, AS

SUBJECT: FEDERATED CLERKS' UNION PLACES SELECTED BAN ON AUTO IMPORTS

1. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH OF FEDERATED CLERKS' UNION OCTOBER 16 ANNOUNCED THAT FOUR HUNDRED MEMBERS IN TALLY CLERKS SECTION SERVICING PORTS OF SYDNEY AND NEWCASTLE WOULD REFUSE TO HANDLE PAPER WORK IN CONNECTION WITH IMPORTED AUTOMOBILES OF EVERY CATEGORY.

2. CLERKS'S UNION ACTION WAS RESULT OF ANNOUNCED CLOSURE OF LEYLAND COMPANY'S PRINCIPAL PLANT IN SYDNEY. THIS WAS CLERKS CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALLY UNION PROTEST WHOSE OBJECTIVE IS NOT AIMED AT AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY BUT AT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICY WHICH UNIONS FEEL IS JEOPARDISING JOBS.

3. NSW BRANCH HAS REFERRED ITS ACTION TO FEDERAL EXECUTIVE
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SEEKING TO IMPOSE NATIONAL BAN ON CAR IMPORTS. FEDERAL

SECRETARY, HOHN GRENVILLE, TOLD LABATT OCTOBER 17 HE WAS IN PROCESS OF POLLING MEMBERS OF FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BY TELEPHONE AND WOULD ANNOUNCE RESULTS WITHIN TWENTY FOUR HOURS. GRENVILLE SAID ALSO THAT HE EXPECTS MIXED REACTION FROM FEDERAL EXECUTIVE AS RETAIL CLERKS SECTION IN AUTOMOBILE SALES INDUSTRY WILL BE GRAVELY AFFECTED BY IMPORT BAN AND SOME BRANCHES MAY EXERCISE AUTONOMOUS RIGHT TO IGNORE NATIONAL BAN EVEN IF FEDERAL EXECUTIVE IMPOSES ONE. GRENVILLE'S EDUCATED GUESS HOWEVER IS THAT BAN WILL PROBABLY SPREAD TO OTHER PORTS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY UNTIL AFFECT ON GENERAL CLERKS EARNINGS CAN BE ASSESSED.

4. ALSO ON OCTOBER 17 BOB WILSON, FEDERAL SECRETARY OF THE VEHICLE BUILDERS' FEDERATION (VBF) TOLD LABATT THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED BY CURRENT ACTION AS HIS UNION HAD WARNED PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER MINISTERS AFTER FEDERAL VBF SHOP STEWARDS CONFERENCE HELD IN AUGUST THAT IMPORT POLICY OF GOVERNMENT WAS ALREADY GRAVELY AFFECTING TOTAL AUTO INDUSTRY INCLUDING MANUFACTURERS OF AUTOMOBILE PARTS. WILSON SAID THAT BORG WARNER WOULD THIS WEEK LAY OFF LARGE PROPORTION OF ITS NSW WORKERS SINCE FORD MOTOR COMPANY HAD POSSIBLY OTHERS HAD SHARPLY CURTAILED ORDERS PLACED WITH BORG WARNER FOR AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSIONS. ACCORDING TO WILSON FORD IS NOW IMPORTING COMPLETE TRANSMISSION ASSEMBLIES FROM ITS PLANTS IN NEW ZEALAND. WHILE WILSON EXPECTED CLERKS TO TAKE ACTION HE WAS "ASTOUNDED" AT SPEED AND COMPLETENESS OF SHUT-DOWN. CLERKS UNION HAD FOUR HUNDRED MEMBERS EMPLOYED AT LEYLANDS AND WAS SECOND BIGGEST UNION REPRESENTED IN PLANT.

5. COMMENT: LABATT POINTS OUT THAT CURRENT ACTION INVOLVES CHIEFLY NON-RADICAL UNIONS. VEHICLE BUILDERS, AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS, ELECTRICAL TRADES UNIONS AND CLERKS ARE ALL COUNTED AMONG MODERATE TO RIGHT WING IN POLITICAL ATTITUDES. EVEN SMALL NUMBER OF AMALGAMATED METAL WORKERS UNION, REPRESENTED IN CURRENT DISPUTE BY LAURIE CARMICHAEL, AN ADMITTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMUNIST, HAS BEEN REMARKABLY QUIESCENT ON POLITICAL ASPECTS OF CURRENT DISPUTE. LABATT NOTES STRANGE SILENCE FROM NORMALLY MILITANT WATERSIDE WORKERS FEDERATION, WHOSE FEDERAL SECRETARY CHARLIE FITZGIBBON HAS SO FAR REMAINED SILENT AND BOTH WILSON AND GRENVILLE EXPECT THAT HE WILL REMAIN SO. WILSON TOLD LABATT CONFIDENTIALLY THAT HIS CONTACTS IN THREE MAJOR AMERICAN SUBSIDIARIES, FORD, GENERAL MOTORS HOLDENS

AND CHRYSLER, ARE PRIVATELY VERY PLEASED AT CLERKS
BANNING ACTION SINCE JAPANESE, BRITISH AND OTHER
IMPORTING GROUPS WILL BE BADLY HURT TO THE BENEFIT
OF THE THREE MAJOR AMERICAN GROUPS.
BROWN

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